

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 03319 081338Z
ACTION NEA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1022

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 3319

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PPDC, TS
SUBJ: NOUIRA VISIT

REF: TUNIS 3243

1. DURING A ONE-HOUR SESSION WITH PRIME MINISTER HEDI NOUIRA, WE TALKED FOR 55 MINUTES BEFORE HE REACHED OUR MAIN AGENDA ITEM, HIS PROSPECTIVE U.S. VISIT. HE SAID HE HAD JUST SIGNED HIS RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER OF MARCH 15 AND ASKED ME TO CONVEY TO WASHINGTON HIS HOPE THAT THE TARDINESS OF HIS REPLY WOULD NOT BE TAKEN AS AN INDICATION OF ANY LACK OF INTEREST IN MAKING THE VISIT. HE WAS STILL EAGER FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AND TALK WITH PRESIDENT CARTER.

2. I THEN TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL FOR PLANNING PURPOSES FOR US TO KNOW WHETHER THERE WERE ANY PERIODS DURING THE REST OF THE YEAR WHERE HIS COMMITMENTS WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT AN INVITATION TO COME TO WASHINGTON. HE SAID THERE WERE NONE, AS OF NOW, ADDING THAT HE TENTATIVELY PLANS A VACATION DURING AUGUST (GENERALLY COINCIDING WITH RAMADHAN THIS YEAR). AFTER HIS LEAVE, HE WOULD NEED ABOUT TWO WEEKS BACK IN TUNIS, BUT WOULD BE WITHOUT ANY FIRM ENGAGEMENTS AFTER MID-SEPTEMBER.

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HOWEVER, HE THEN ADDED THAT EVEN HIS VACATION PLANS WERE FLEXIBLE, AND HE FELT SURE THAT HE COULD FIT INTO ANY ARRANGEMENTS SUGGESTED BY THE PRESIDENT.
MULCAHY

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